

Thinking about a Fiery Mermaid

by Krystalzlazz

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Summary: Zane reflects on his relationship with Rikki over the years, his relationship with a fiery mermaid. Zikki. In progress. Explores episode by episode Zane's feelings on their conflict in Season 3.

Next: post s3.

1. Chapter 1: Falling for Her

Thinking about a fiery mermaid

_Dedicated to Zikki3 for the review which inspired me to write this. A special mention to hermione321, Lovestorymermaid and liveonpurpose for reviewing 'Rikki's Reflections' _

* * *

><p>[Zane reflects on his relationship with Rikki over the years, his relationship with a fiery mermaid]

A/N: This is the first installment. There shall be at least a few more chapters coming in the future. I hope you enjoy it, and please review to tell me your thoughts and constructive criticism. (no flames)

Thanks

~Krystalzlazz

* * *

><p>I remember thinking 'There is something special about that girl' all those years earlier. I first saw her at school. Rikki Chadwick, the new girl. A loner.
Despite this I thought she was astoundingly attractive " genuinely attractive. She never smiled, and she smirked unimpressed at Nate, my other mates and I as we harassed and teased the younger kids and those who were less popular. I guess I

was a bully, a rich prat. Of course, I didn't see it back then.

OoOoO

I sighed exasperated. It was missing. The zodiac wouldn't start without it. Someone who knew a bit about boats would be behind this. Perhaps it was Gary, that guy was always trying to get under my skin. Cleo Sertori was walking along the wharf; the perfect person to take my frustrations out on. Heartless as I was, I knew she couldn't swim as I set her adrift, watched and laughed. Suddenly, in a blur of red, black and blonde, someone launched themselves off the pier into the boat. Cleo shrieked. It was Rikki. In the distance she held up the spark plug. The cheek of it. She stared at me while talking to Cleo with a glare of disgust and something close to hatred. She started the motor. Before I knew it, I had been showered in water; drenched. That was the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

OoOoO

Oh the hatred, jibes and smirks were played between us for a long while. She was especially bitter every time I brought up mermaids. I knew I had seen one, it had rescued me. Things changed between me and Rikki over on Mako. The bush was on fire: at least, I remember it to be. The strangest thing was that Rikki was there: she was in a real state. I sat down beside her and she started saying she couldn't do it anymore. This had worried me, what did she mean? And then, to my absolute surprise, she leant over and kissed me. I enjoyed it at first but thenâ€¦well I must have blacked out. It must have been one hell of a kiss: I didn't remember anything after that. I confronted Rikki about it the next day with a grin. She however shut me down and told me to forget it. I could not understand her reaction, I mean, she had kissed me right? I tried to put it to the side but I felt the hate subsiding. I was actually beginning to like her, actually like her like her. As the weeks passed I found her retorts and rebukes increasingly attractive, I would never let anyone see that of course.

Then, I saw her at the seminar my dad was speaking at. It was a scam but it was partially how my family got rich. I'd been to many like this before and they were all the same, terribly dull. I saw her in the foyer.

>"What are you doing here?" I had asked. She looked surprised to see me.
"What are you doing here?" she said.

>"I asked you first," I replied.
"What are you? Ten?" she retorted. I sighed. Rikki's fire was attractive mainly when I wasn't on the receiving end.

"Well, it's been riveting," she said. I couldn't just let her go; even though we weren't friends, I was so bored and lonely.

>Rikki took me up on the food offer and followed me upstairs. As she helped herself to food, I talked to her about the room. I am sorry to say, for some sad reason, I was trying to impress her: "If you go for that sort of thing," I said
"I don't" she replied finding the food much more interesting than me. I felt like an idiot. She went out onto the deck and the unexpected happened; the door locked behind me. No way. I was trapped on a deck in the sky with none other than Rikki Chadwick.

It wasn't so much that I was trapped with her; it was more that I

couldn't let her of all people see me and my fear of heights. I would have laughed at her vampire jibe if I wasn't in such a state. After I snapped at her, she clicked onto it immediately.

>"Are you scared of heights or something?"
I hesitated as she led me to the edge of the deck, "Trust me," she said. She looked so beautiful in that instance. She asked me to think of something I admired, a painting or something. I must've looked blank until she suggested a speedboat or 'stupid' car. As she beamed at me, all I could think of was how beautiful she was and how I admired her for not laughing at me. Her smile was contagious, and one of my own crept across my face. For some reason she made me feel safe.

>"Feeling better?" she asked with a grin. I agreed in the affirmative. I was amazed at the changed in our relationship: first we despised each other, I was an arrogant prick, cool, in the 'in' crowd. She on the other hand was a loner when she first started and then she had surprisingly made friends with Emma, Lewis and Cleo, all of which I had grown up with. I had been friends with them but I outgrew them deciding I was much cooler. Seeing how I had ditched them and became a stuck up bully, there is no wonder they started to despise me. Rikki had seen the persona I put on in public and judged me rightfully for it. I on the other hand, had judged her from the beginning. But then I saw her as she was on the deck, away from our reality. We opened up and I told her things that I kept to myself and she did the same in response. I was falling for her, I realised then not for the first time.<p>

Thunder rumbled in the sky and a raindrop fell onto the railing. Rikki dashed under cover right before it started to pour. I thought this strange but I couldn't judge because of my exhibition earlier, "I didn't want to get wet," she explained weakly.

>I offered her my jacket and I think I was actually surprised she took it. I tucked a piece of stray blonde hair behind her ear and leaned in to kiss her when my Dad had to ruin the perfect moment. He wasn't impressed at our antics of throwing paper darts off the deck â€" his notes. I couldn't believe that he actually went as far to say that Rikki didn't have a future. It felt good to stand up to him, especially in defending Rikki. When I turned to Rikki, I saw that she had a smile on her face. I almost laughed at the expression on my Dad's face when she said it would be a lie to say that it was nice to meet him, but then she left. For the second time that day, I couldn't just let her go. I caught her in the elevator, just in time, glad for an excuse: "You've still got my jacket," She shrugged it off and handed it to me. I leaned in for a kiss and she responded. It felt magical. I concluded in my jumbled mind that I had fallen for her. A girl I had thought uncool and inferior had captured my interests; who would have thought it?<p>

2. Chapter 2: Conflict

****Chapter 2****

****A/N: ****_Wow, this story hasn't been updated in over a year! I'm sure it was just yesterday when I wrote the first instalment. This story is going to be a collection of one-shots regarding Zane's perspective on his and Rikki's relationship throughout the three seasons and beyond. (depending on how many I write.) This chapter and the next few, as by request from reviews, is focusing on Zane's perspective in regards to the conflict in Season 3 and the breakup. This is my interpretation of what goes through his head. Feel free to**

review or PM me your feelings on this interpretation. Tell me how you feel - did I capture it well? or not? Constructive criticism welcome but no flames._**

Anyhoo, on with the chapter!

Season 3 Episode 17

"You don't already have plans for tonight do you?" Rikki asked me. We were sat facing each other in the caf   we ran together.

"It's nothing I can't work around," I replied. Rikki had finally come willingly to ask for my help. I was thrilled. The only problem was the card game that was planned here this evening with my mates. I wondered momentarily about how Nate would take it.

"You can't really work around a full moon," Rikki said rolling her eyes. I promised to cancel my plans, and I meant it. I really did intend to be there for Rikki, to support her. Just when I thought it was all going to go well, I found out that Will had been invited also. Did Rikki plead for help like she did with me? Did she trust him more? I felt jealousy flood my rational thought. Will. I hated that guy. How did he get along with my girlfriend so well? Did she prefer his company? She had been hanging out with him a lot more recently. Was my bad feeling about him born purely out of my jealousy of his relationship with the woman I loved? When I let Nate and my other mates stay, I did it to spite Will    not really worrying about the consequences. Looking back on it, I ask why on earth I could never act wisely and why I was always doing the wrong thing.

Rikki looked betrayed. Hurt. All my fault. Guilt raced through me. Instead of acknowledging my wrong doing, I acted as if what I was doing was perfectly fine.

"Can I have a word with you in private?" Rikki asked forcefully.

"Yes." I agreed firmly. I couldn't do this in front of Will. It was all his fault.

"How could you do this to me?" She demanded.

I tried to defend myself; "Why does everything have to be about you!"

I knew the reason. She was my beautiful mermaid. Why was I turning her gift against her? Why didn't I think before speaking?

"It's not just that." I said quietly. I knew she saw straight through me.

"Then what?" there was a pause. "Is it Will?"

She hit the nail on the head. She laughed cynically, "I can't believe it," she said in disbelief. "You're jealous."

"I'm not jealous!" I denied it. I was feeling embarrassed. Therefore, I came up with an excuse, "I just, I don't get why you need him more than you need me."

"He's actually willing to put us first." Rikki replied. That hurt.

"So am I!" I exclaimed. She didn't believe me. She didn't trust me.

Will came in to check on us. I felt hatred build up.

"He's not welcome here." I stated strongly.

"Fine. I'm leaving too," she paused. "You wonder why I never ask you for help." I very rarely saw Rikki this angry. I stared at the space she had occupied just a few seconds earlier. I collapsed onto the couch and put my head in my hands. How had everything gone so wrong? In frustration I through a cushion across the room. It hit the door and rebounded knocking over an ornament. It smashed on the ground. I felt like I was in pieces, just like the ornament. Rikki was a part of me. I knew I was losing her.

After I left the office, and re-joined my mates. My façade had returned to its place.

I was in for another bruising, round two. Cleo was my opponent this time.

"You're not much of anything now these days, are you Zane." Cleo accused me maliciously. She was accusing me of not caring. Is that truly how it looked?

"Rikki needs to know that she can rely on you. We all do," she continued. Her tone softened slightly.

"You can rely on me," I retorted.

"Then prove it."

I kicked everyone out following Cleo's prompting. This was something I should have done a lot earlier.

Rikki had returned to the café. She looked pretty shaken up. What had I done? I was told that Will had got there just in time.

"I bet he did." I said negatively, sarcastically. Rikki wasn't even looking me in the eye. I followed her.

"It'll never happen again," I said sincerely. I was hoping that she would believe me. I truly hoped that I wouldn't let her down again. She meant way too much to me. "I'll be here for you from now on."

She nodded. I gave a sigh of relief.

"'kay," she said in a non-committal manner. She was vacant. I hoped she would forgive me. We walked out of the café on the way back to her trailer park.

Majority of the walk was made in silence.

"You don't need to do this," Rikki said breaking the cold

atmosphere.

"I wanted to." I replied. I reached over and took her hand. Hesitantly, she returned my grip. After another minute of silence, I said something that both shocked her and myself.

"I'm sorry." I said quietly.

She looked at me in shock. "What was that?" We had stopped walking. I stroked her cheek.

"I'm sorry," I said again. I leant in and we kissed. After a few seconds, she pulled away abruptly and walked away ahead of me. That hurt. Was she afraid of getting close to me again? I jogged to catch up.

"Rikki,"

"Stop, okay!" she exclaimed.

"What did I do?" I asked. I regretted this when she turned on her heel and began to stride purposefully towards her house. "Okay, I've messed up. I've apologised. Please forgive me?" I begged.

"I need some time." She replied quietly.

"Okay," I nodded. "Can I hug you?" I asked vulnerably. Rikki was the only one who had ever seen my exposed side. She nodded hesitantly. I loved her so much. Why couldn't I tell her? I buried my face into her shoulder. Who knew when I'd be able to do this again. After some time, she began to gently push me away. I reluctantly let go. I watched her disappear through the door. I shoved my hands in my pockets and walked back to the caf  .

****A/N: ****_I hope you've enjoyed this! The next one hopefully won't be too far away._****

****_I am officially an adult! Just had my graduation of senior year! Now I have to find a job to fundraise for University next year._****

****_Thanks for the support of the first chapter of this story. Thanks especially to: _**_Aralor, TriGemini, Lilypel, Zikki 3, ashray4, MagicMaker494, Avatar Kat, liveonpurpose, HybridsRose __**and __H2Ozikkiaddict__** for reviewing! I appreciate them all. Your reviews, favourites and follows have actually inspired me to continue this story. Thanks again!**_**

3. Chapter 3: Arguments

****Chapter 3 ****

Season 3 Episode 18

I hadn't seen Rikki much for a few weeks. When we saw each other, it was awkward â   she was clearly avoiding me. She was avoiding me and spending time over on Mako more than ever before. I'd have thought we would have made up properly by now. I kept my fa  ade up. She came into the office.

"Hello stranger," I said cheerily. I was genuinely happy to see her so it wasn't hard to be. "I've hardly seen you around lately,"

"I've been busy," she replied. I didn't believe her. Why would she prefer Mako over me? Was it an excuse to hang out with Will?

"You wouldn't understand." Rikki said in resignation.

"Try me." I said. She looked at me hopefully. A light that had been missing from her eyes returned for that moment. She said she felt like she belonged at Mako Island. Why did I find that amusing? She belonged in the water and on land. Sometimes, I felt like if she were a normal human being things would be much easier. I am an idiot. Why did I laugh? In that moment it seemed so strange. It was as if she was becoming someone or something else. Rikki had just opened up to me and I ridiculed her. She laughed cynically in response.

"For a second there, I actually thought you cared." Why was I constantly causing her to hurt me? When she hurt I hurt. Why could my brain not wrap itself around this fact?

"How could I be so wrong?" she continued. I had noticed that she had become increasingly aloof and her normal fiery temperament was had developed so that she reacted more violently than ever to everything.

"You've changed." I told her. She rolled her eyes and walked off. Why am I constantly putting my foot in it? I chastised myself as I had been doing increasingly lately. My judgement on her change in character wasn't just a judgement based on my own feelings and our relationship going downhill â€" mainly from my own fault, I admit; I had overheard Cleo and Bella talking in the cafÃ© about how Rikki had been distancing herself from them also. I hoped I wasn't the cause. More than anything, I wanted her to open up to me. I wanted to show that I loved her. I was much better than some rocky cave and a pool. I know why I didn't. I was afraid; afraid of her reaction, of rejection, of showing I cared. I was a coward hiding behind my ego.

"I know I haven't been around a lot lately, but there's a good reason." Rikki said.

"Yeah, secret mermaid business." I said, sighing.

"I'm serious," she put her hand on my knee. "I could use your help." Rikki was pleading with me. "Please Zane, you're the only one I can ask," What was wrong? Why was I feeling reluctant? Why was I feeling betrayed by how little time she has spent with me? If anything, I was the let-down. Did I believe deep down that our issues were all her fault? I had a meeting with Sophie. I felt a little guilty at keeping our association a secret from Rikki. Why was I hiding that from her? Was it wrong to feel good about her needing me for a change?

I said I couldn't help her. I had an important meeting in a few minutes. I felt like the enemy again as hurt flooded her eyes. Why did I do that? I was rightfully justified wasn't I? If so, why did I feel so bad? She put her head in her hands before getting up, following me out the door reluctantly.

"This is your meeting?" Rikki asked in disbelief.

"I can explain," I began. I knew she would take this the wrong way. I told her I was still sponsoring Will, that it was just business.

"What kind of business?" she asked icily, looking directly at Sophie. Her tone was hostile. I steered her away from Sophie.

"What is your problem?" I asked.

"Problem? You don't even like Will!"

"That has nothing to do with like, it's..." I began to protest.

"Just business," she interrupted. "Yeah. Well don't let me stop you."

Not wanting to put up with me anymore, she stormed out of the café. Sophie stood facing me. I looked passed her watching Rikki go. I needed to sort this out with her. I couldn't lose her.

"Rikki!" I called, leaving Sophie behind.

I saw her striding purposefully, angrily. I ran after her.

"Rikki, would you wait," I said out of breath. She didn't slow down.

"How long has this been going on." She asked. I could hear the hurt in her voice.

"I kept the sponsorship going after we fired her," I admitted, "I would've told you, but I knew how you'd react." I continued trying to defend my actions. She looked at me in disbelief.

"So these meetings have just been going on behind my back the whole time," we stopped walking.

I shrugged. I couldn't think of the words.

"You're unbelievable," she said continuing to walk away from me. What could I say? She was right but I wasn't the only one at fault.

"What do you expect?" I began, trying to keep my anger as a result of frustration in check, "you're never here, and when you are all you talk about is mermaid stuff," I continued. What had happened to us? We used to be able to talk for hours. Had she changed? Or had I changed too? Sometimes I wished that there was an activity we both did that we could talk about. I wished that there was something we had in common other than the café and me knowing her secret. What went wrong? I couldn't think of the things we used to talk about.

"You're totally obsessed," I said.

"Don't act like I don't try to include you," she retorted. I regretted my harsh words but she didn't include me. I voiced this to her in a defeated tone. She turned to me in disbelief.

"Today, I practically begged you to help me," We stopped again. She was making her point clear. "You tell me you have a meeting. You could've told me it was with Sophie, but no!" she put her hands up, "You try to keep it to yourself like it is some big secret." I looked away. I felt guilty. I knew how it looked to her now. Her reaction is exactly why I didn't tell her. I couldn't help but consider what her reaction would have been if she did know.

"Tell me Zane, why is that?" she continued. I was sick of her raving. I hated confrontations "especially with my loved ones. The accumulated feelings of guilt and frustration led into my next retort.

"You can talk," I replied heatedly, she was returning my stare with an equal intensity. "Sometimes I think you use the whole Mako Island thing to hang out with Will." I knew my jealousy was evident in that statement.

"What!" she exclaimed. She turned away from me again and began walking quickly. There seemed to be a pattern in this.

"You see more of him than you do of me," I continued.

"That's because he gets it!" Rikki replied. "He actually understands." What did he understand more than me? Was there something I wasn't getting? What was wrong with her?

"Well I don't," I admitted. She turned around to face me once again. "I don't get it. I don't understand why this," I paused checking to see if there was anyone in ear shot. "This mermaid thing is just, so important to you."

She raised her eyebrows as if to say, 'You've got to be kidding me.'

I continued strongly, "I just want to be with the real you!" Once the words were out of my mouth I regretted them. I knew why it was important. She wasn't human. From our time together I knew how she valued it. By 'real' I meant the human side of her. The side of her that came without mermaid strings attached. I should have known she would've taken that the wrong way. I am an imbecile.

"This is the real me." She said in exasperation. She raised her arms in resignation. She had given up on me and given up trying to make me understand. She walked off. There was no point in pursuing her. I had blown it, big time.

For a moment I watched her retreating form before turning around. I kicked the sand in frustration and began to head back to the café to face the meeting which had started this particular drama. I was in no mood to see that particular red-head.

Things were going from bad to worse.

* * *

><p>AN: ****_I hope you enjoyed this chapter. I have been inspired to write this story! I haven't had inspiration like this since two years ago when I began A Fishy Tale. It's a great feeling!

Consequently, here is another update, only a day after the previous!
PLEASE REVIEW! It just adds to that inspiration._**

_Thanks so much to __zikki 3 __**for reviewing - you are amazing!
I love you so much - you are always loyal to me and my writing. This
story was dedicated to you after all :P**_

_**Please review, favourite and follow - I appreciate the lot! They
really do inspire me to write faster.**_

**Love you all!**

_**UPDATE: 30/1/2014 : I have just updated this chapter - I watched
the episode again and realised I had gotten a few things wrong so now
I have changed it. You will find this chapter is now true to the
episode in its entirety. Thanks!**_

4. Chapter 4: Breakup

Chapter 4

Season 3 Episode 19

I continued to put up my faÃ§ade. I faÃ§ade of confidence â€" like
nothing was different in our relationship. I wanted her to be there
at the cafÃ©. My reason was, "I always look so much better standing
next to you." Her response was a typical eye roll and she walked
away. "Come on, we've been planning this for ages,"

"Don't you mean that you've been planning this with Sophie for ages?"
she asked me bitterly. What was her problem with Sophie? It was just
business.

"What's got you in a mood?" I asked with a frown.

"I'm not in a mood," she retorted.

"If you say so," I said with my eyebrows raised. I felt her eyes
following me as I walked away. I got busy organising things before
the big dive. Of course, Sophie was there to check in on things. I
was surprised to find out from Bella that Rikki was taking a
'break.'

"Where is she?" I asked.

"She's taking a break."

"A break? Now?" I asked in disbelief.

"She needed to get away for a while." Bella replied.

"From what?" I asked.

"From you." Bella said point blank. My mouth opened. I recollected
myself.

"Didn't you say something about sound check?" I moved away quickly.
Was our relationship in that much of a mess? Hopefully we could still
patch it up. Was it her or me? I couldn't think about that; I had to

continue to organise the event " it needed to go smoothly.

Sophie came into the office. She asked me about Rikki.

"She had something else on." I replied.

"Today?" Sophie asked, her eyebrows rose, "There isn't a problem between you two is there?" she cut to the chase.

Were people catching on?

"Nothing serious," I replied. We had had issues before and we had worked through them. I still clung to the hope that everything would go back to the way it was a few months earlier. Sophie asked if there was anything she could do.

"No, I've got it under control."

"Because if there is," she continued. "Anything I can do" she put her hand on my shoulder. "You know I will,"

I nodded my understanding. I felt increasingly uncomfortable with her hand there. Was she flirting with me? Or was that a friendly sign of assurance?

"I'll keep that in mind," I replied. Hundreds of thoughts flowed through my mind. She knew I was taken, right? I decided to mark it down as nothing and continued with my organisation. I had to keep my thoughts clear.

Later in the day, we went out on the boat to see Will and the other divers do their thing. I wondered if Will could do it " win the competition. He had to.

"He should be back up by now," I said to Sophie. I hoped this wasn't a repeat of the last time I saw Will dive.

"There! That's the 80 metre marker!" Sophie exclaimed.

"80 metres!" I shared her enthusiasm.

"That's a new record!"

"We did it!" We embraced. "Congratulations!"

"You too," she replied. I pulled back from the hug and the next thing she did shocked me. Sophie Benjamin was kissing me. This wasn't right! I had to push her away. Why couldn't I do it? She pulled away a few seconds later to congratulate her brother. What had I done! I wiped the kiss from my mouth and looked at her with a frown. I had really done it this time. I had to focus on the moment at hand.

"We did it! We're the champions," I smiled at Will.

"Good for you," he replied gloomily. I kept up my carefree façade for the media and for the people congratulating us for Will's success. I didn't let myself think over how on earth I was going to tell my girlfriend that I had cheated on her. I didn't expect to find Rikki in the office waiting for me.

"Good day?" she asked. I didn't know what to say.

"Yeah," I said after a moment's pause. "Great. This has been huge for us. You should have been there for the dive," I continued. I sat down on the couch.

"I was." She said sadly. With those two words I knew that she had seen. My heart sank low in my chest. How on earth was I going to salvage this situation? "You and Sophie seemed pleased with each other," she continued. I didn't know what to say. My mouth opened and closed like a goldfish.

"We got a bit carried away, celebrating" I began. "I mean, that-that's all,"

"This is me you're talking to remember? I know what I saw."

"It-it's nothing to get upset about," I started. The disappointment in her eyes was killing me slowly. Guilt was eating me up.

"I'm not," she replied in defeat. She got up and sighed. "I've known that we were over for a while."

My eyes widened. She had given up, just like that?

"Over?" I asked in disbelief.

"I thought you'd moved on from being immature and selfish. But you haven't," Each word she uttered was like a knife to the heart. I had to defend myself again.

"Well, maybe the problem is you have changed."

"Oh," she nodded, "I have. I'm not going to put up with it anymore." She paused. "Bye, Zane."

"Rikki," I protested. She left the room. I clenched my teeth. I had never felt such sadness and anger. Was this what it was like to have your heart broken? I threw my hat down, a minor release of frustration. I had brought this on myself. No matter how much I tried to put the blame back on Rikki, it was mainly me. I was the one who had cheated. I was the one who wasn't understanding. I indeed was arrogant, immature and selfish, as she had said. I was an idiot. I vowed that if I ever managed to win her heart back, that I would never be the same, I would put her interests first. I would try harder to keep her. She was too good for me. There were more fish in the sea, right? There was always Sophie? How on earth could I even consider that? Rikki had her flaws, but she was on another level to everyone else. She was beautiful, fiery, stubborn and confident. I loved her. I would never give up trying to win her back.

* * *

><p>AN: _Hey everyone :-> I hope you enjoyed this chapter. I hope that you think I have captured his character well.

_**

_Thanks so much to __Bella12, Acelover12, zikki 3, H2Ozikkiaddict, horsegirl275, **and **Cherry003_ _**for reviewing. It is because of you guys that I continue to update and write this

story. **_

**There will always be another chapter until I say that the story is over. Due to my busy life and multiple stories all going at once, it can be up to a month between updates - sometimes just over but I try to keep it to a month. Check out my other stories.**

**Thanks for the constructive criticism - I always take it into account.**

**Thanks for reading!**

5. Chapter 5: Drastic Measures

Chapter 5

Season 3 Episode 20

After our breakup, Rikki seemed to be avoiding me and the caf   still named after her. I couldn't move on. I loved her too much. I decided to give her time, time to try to forgive me before I once again pursued her. I knew that if I tried to early, it would ruin all chances for the future.

Without Rikki, the caf   was a mess. Chaotic more like. I hadn't realised how much she did for the place until she was gone. I was so overwhelmed that I accepted Sophie's offer to help. In the past she had been organised and efficient    a little bossy- but I truly was down to my last wire. I had to admit she did a good job. With everyone else against me, it was nice to have someone I could rely on.

"I'm glad you're here." I told her.

OoOoO

Once I had finished cleaning the coffee machine, I looked up and saw the woman of my dreams walking in. She looked beautiful. She was more stunning than I remembered and that red dress looked amazing on her. It reminded me of the one I had got her. It was as if she was walking in slow motion. I felt my heart skip a beat when a smile lit up her face as she approached her destination. A smile could not help but spread across my face. At least she wasn't going to stay far away forever.

"What is she doing here?" I was called out of my reverie by my new manager, Sophie. "I'll tell her to leave." How could she even suggest that?

"No, no," I grabbed her arm, "No. Leave Rikki alone." She looked at me in disbelief. I think she knew I was still hung up on my ex. I noticed something sticky and green in her hair. "What's in your hair?" I asked. "We're trying to look professional here," I said walking off.

* * *

><p>Season 3 Episode 21

I sat on the beach, staring out at the surf. I had been doing this a lot lately. I was once again falling into the hole of blaming someone else for my own mistakes. I had started to consider the fact that Will may have had a hand in making Rikki give up on our relationship so quickly. I wanted to see Rikki. I always wanted to see her. I needed to discuss our breakup. Fortunately for me, I saw Cleo, Bella and Rikki coming past the bench I was sitting on. I got up and headed over to them.

"Hey," I said, "I've been looking for you."

"And?" she said, unimpressed.

"Well, I just want to talk,"

"Zane," she began. "Leave it alone alright, it's over." She reconfirmed my fears. I couldn't let her go that quickly.

"New necklace." I stated. She turned to me.

"Yeah, I got it from a friend," she replied. That was vague. Was she hiding something?

"What kind of friend?" I asked.

"Leave it alone, it's none of your business," Bella interrupted. Rikki sighed.

"So it's a guy-friend?" I asked slowly, my disappointment seeping into my voice. Will. Of course. Why would she accept his gift when even when we were together, it was such an effort to get her to accept anything.

"I bet I can guess who," I said.

Rikki shrugged, "You're making a fool out of yourself." She could feel the tension between us.

"He's like this tall," I gestured, "Into diving,"

"What are you doing?" Rikki asked. I looked away. I knew my jealousy was obvious.

"I'm moving on," she continued. My heart sank. "So should you,"

"Yeah?" I retorted, "I've moved on too, just tell me his name." My voice betrayed me. I had tried to make that at least a little bit convincing. She sighed and walked away. How had she got over this so easily? Had she been cheating on me? I was one to talk, I had cheated on her. I was so frustrated!

I walked to the caf  . No one was there. Why was that?

"It might be a slow day, but you might as well make an effort," I told Sophie. She told me what she had been doing and I felt bad for snapping at her. She was right. I had been stressed lately. It was all because of Rikki. My heart swelled with sadness and then anger as I thought of a single name. Will.

"We make a good team, you and I. Sit down, relax," she said, getting up. "You're so tense."

"It's Rikki," I admitted.

"Again?" she replied. I looked down. "You've got to forget about her." There was a pause.

"My shift's over soon, we could go on a walk on the beach?" she asked. Was she asking me out? It barely registered in my brain. Thoughts swirled around regarding Rikki and Will.

"Does your brother talk about Rikki much?" I asked.

"Will and Rikki?" she asked in disbelief.

"Some guy gave her a crystal necklace," I said, "And I bet it was him," I added tightly.

"They're just friends as far as I know," Sophie replied.

"Yeah," I said, not quite believing, "So everyone keeps saying."

"Maybe it's time to put her behind you," she suggested. "All she does is stress you out." Everyone was telling me to move on. Even Rikki herself. I did not want to move on. I loved her. How was I going to get her back? I stormed from the room. I would figure something out.

OoOoO

"Will and Rikki are definitely seeing each other," Sophie told me. I could not begin to explain my emotions. Severe disappointment and rage did not even begin to cover it. I kept my voice even.

"Well, do you know that for sure?"

She shrugged. "They're trying to hide it, but, he's my little brotherâ€|" she continued.

"Great." I said. How could my heart break for a second time?

"I'm sorry but it's true. You're being two timed."

"Okay, I get the idea!" I said. She was making me feel worse.

"â€|I could, make you dinner," she suggested. There she went again, flirting with me. I wasn't in the mood. I had to make sure for myself.

"Hey, fish boy," I yelled, approaching his boatshed. "Fish boy!" There was no one home and the door was unlocked. Idiot. I walked in and began to look around. There it was. Rikki's necklace. If he had given it to her, then why was it here? Maybe she would come looking for me if I took it. I had to talk to her. Blackmail?

I took the necklace and left.

OoOoO

I was examining the necklace when Rikki walked in.

"Give it back."

"You figured that out pretty quick," I said.

"I'm warning you," she began.

"I want to know what's going on between you and Will," I said, not looking at her.

"Nothing is going on!" she denied. I got up.

"I would've just given you one," I continued.

"What?"

"What happened to us?" I asked sadly. "We really connected." She shook her head.

"You're forgetting all the bad stuff," she replied.

"Is that so wrong?" Why couldn't I look at the positives? I was depressed enough as it is.

"Yes. You ruined it Zane," she said. Deep down I knew that. Guilt flooded me again. That had been happening a lot recently. "Deal with it."

"I know I made some mistakes," I said. "But there's still a chance for us isn't there?" I asked hopefully. "If we just got back together, things would work out, I know it." I paused. "I just can't stop my feelings for you." There it all was. Out on the table. She looked away. I knew her better than anyone but she was becoming increasingly hard to read. Despite this, I saw in her eyes how this breakup had affected her. She felt the same way. She had to.

"And," I added vulnerably. "I know you feel the same way too. Don't you?" She looked down. Had I hit the nail on the head?

"Think of everything we've been through together? I've always been there for you, and your friends," I continued again. Well â€" some of that was slightly stretched but I needed to win her back. "This place was supposed to be our thing." I said. "Our dream, and without youâ€"|" I trailed off. I saw a smirk on her face for a split second. That was progress I guess.

"What about Sophie?" she asked seriously, raising her eyebrows.

"What about her?" I replied.

"You seem to have set up pretty nicely here,"

"She works here." I said. "So what?"

Rikki scoffed. "Come on, she's into you. Can you honestly look me in the eye and tell me you don't feel the same way?"

"Not a bit." I said firmly, directly looking her in the eyes. She seemed taken aback. She looked away again.

"I can't trust you anymore." She stated. That wasn't fair, was it?

"I didn't do anything!" I defended myself.

"You kissed her!" She replied in disbelief. I knew that. Why couldn't I just say sorry?

"It didn't mean anything!"

She shook her head. "I saw you. It wasn't nothing." I saw the hurt behind her eyes. My jealousy fuelled the next stage of the argument.

"You don't want to believe me. You're making up excuses so you can be with someone else,"

"That's ridiculous." She replied. Was she telling the truth? There was silence momentarily. I really had made a mess of this situation.

"Let's just go out and get something to eat and I'll give it back after." I suggested softly.

"No." she replied. How could she refuse me? I had done nothing wrong! My thoughts were jumbled who was to blame. Anger took over my senses.

"You want me to leave you alone?" I stormed to the other side of the room.

"Yes." She replied simply, following me.

"Fine." Blackmail it is. I couldn't not have her in my life. "Then just know that's the end, I don't owe you anything." She looked confused. I had a weapon.

"I don't want anything from you," Rikki said with a puzzled expression.

"Really," I scoffed. "Because if we're apart, I can't guarantee I can keep your secret." Her face look horrified. It was her own fault. She had driven me to this. She and Will. I tried to convince myself I was doing nothing wrong.

"What?" She asked me, her jaw slightly slack in shock.

"You heard me."

She gasped in response. "I never thought you'd sink that low." More guilt.

"You want me to be loyal to you, all I'm asking for is the same in return."

"Give me the necklace." She spelt it out for me.

"What is so special about it?" I asked. I threw it on the table.

"Is everything okay, Zane?" Sophie came in. Of all times.

"It's none of your business." Rikki replied.

"If this is about my brother, it is my business." Sophie continued.

"Stay out of this, Sophie," I said. Could she not take a hint?

"It seems you've got your nose in everyone's business," Rikki said snidely. Sophie's mouth opened.

Maybe I could bring Rikki around by threatening to involve Sophie?

"She doesn't know the half of it yet," I said, turning to Rikki. Suddenly the lights went out. When they came back on, she was gone and so was the necklace.

"Rikki?" I called, leaving the office.

"What just happened?" Sophie asked.

"Nothing." I replied. I couldn't do it. I couldn't tell Sophie. I couldn't render Rikki helpless by her secret being revealed to the world. I still loved her way too much.

OoOoO

"Have you heard any more from Rikki?" Sophie asked. I was busy with café stuff when she came in.

"Pretty weird her turning up like that," she continued.

"You think?" I replied.

"Yeah, I do." Sophie was getting suspicious. Had she overheard any of mine and Rikki's conversation?

"You ever going to really tell me what happened last night?" she asked.

I looked at her, considering. No. I looked back at my computer and began typing. My conscience should tell me something. Betraying her trust once again would not be a good thing.

OoOoO

That afternoon, I was looking out at the sea again. My place to think. It made me feel calm. I could finally clear my thoughts. I was a complete and utter idiot. Rikki approached me. I knew why.

"Did you tell her?" she asked.

"Who?" I asked in reply.

"Sophie." I didn't reply. She was getting worried. "Did you tell her we're mermaids?" Rikki asked forcefully.

"No." I said. I truly was glad that that was my answer. What would have happened if Sophie found out?

She didn't say anything, but I could see her relief. She walked away.

"Rikki, wait." She turned around. "I'm really sorry." She seemed slightly taken aback at my apology. I never apologised.

"I said some pretty stupid things last night. I just lost my head." Her expression was that of agreement. "But um, I'll make it up to you someday. I promise." I said seriously. She came closer.

"I can't do this anymore." Rikki said. She almost looked like she was about to cry. "We need to know if we can trust you with this from now on."

I knew how I felt. I didn't want to let her down again.

"Of course," I replied. "But I'll never forget the good times we've had. I mean, can you?"

"No." she admitted, "But I also can't forget all the bad stuff either." She was right. I had messed our relationship up. It wasn't her fault. Or Will's fault. It was a result of all my bad decisions.

"So, until then," she continued, "You're lucky I'm even speaking to you, alright?" she began to walk away. She was right. At least that was something. I sat back up on the railing seeing her retreating form accompanied with her fellow mermaids. I would find a way to make it up to her. I would find a way to win her back.

* * *

><p>AN: ****_It's a miracle! I updated twice in the space of a week! (It helps that I don't start Uni for a few weeks :P)_**

I hope you enjoyed this chapter - it is especially long. There wasn't enough Rikki/Zane in episode 20 for the whole chapter, so I did both. It's so long because in episode 21 has a lot of dialogue...

I quoted it directly from the episode, watching and typing, watching and typing. An extremely long process. I hope you appreciate my dedication :P lol This particular chapter was a labour of love.

Anyway, thanks for all the support you have given this story, and my others, and to me as an author. Remember, reviews inspire me to write faster.

_Thanks to __zikki 3, H2Ozikkiaddict, missrikkijackson __**and **_Cherry003 __**for reviewing!*_

6. Chapter 6: Moon

Chapter 6

Season 3 Episode 22

I was lying on my bed staring at the ceiling. Thinking about my girlfriend, Rikki. Check that â€" EX-girlfriend. Shouldn't I be the one mad at her overreaction? I should be trying to get over her. No matter what I had been doing over the last few weeks nothing had changed. I still loved her. I still felt guilty. I knew it was all my fault. I got up and looked at the calendar. I had a meeting the next day. I sighed again. Running the cafÃ© was a lot harder without Rikki. Sophie was a hard worker but it just wasn't the same. Nothing was the same without my fiery mermaid.

I noticed that it was a full moon today. I grabbed my stuff for work. Did Rikki know? She probably did. Would she need help? Full moons nearly always ended in disaster. I felt the burning need to call her. I missed her voice. As pitiful as it may seem, I used the full moon as an excuse to call her. Maybe she would need my help again and I could win her trust back? I walked out of my house, locking the door behind me. Before I knew what had come over me, I was dialling her number.

"Hello?" I heard her answer. My heart began racing.

"Hey Rikki, I just wanted to check if you knew it was a full moon today," I said quickly, the words tumbling out. She knew it was me instantly.

"Yeah, Zane, I know it's a full moon,"

"Do you need any help?" I was surprised she had not hung up already.

"No, no I don't need help, thanks. Bye." Before I could reply she was gone. Well, that was short lived. I should have known. It did feel nice to hear her voice. I noticed that she did not have an angry tone â€" just an exasperated one. That was progress! But the way she blew me off â€" it made me feel upset. She wasn't going to even give me a chance.

I had a frown on my face when I walked into my cafÃ©. Rikki's cafÃ©.

"What's up?" Sophie asked when I arrived.

"Nothing." I replied shortly. Somehow she knew what was wrong.

"Rikki?" she questioned. I stopped and turned to her. "What happened?"

I looked at my phone. "Nothing," I replied, defeat evident in my voice.

"You need to move on," she said.

"Yeah, right," I said quietly. I had been trying to banish the thoughts of the amazing, beautiful and funny girl I loved, but to no avail. I guessed I could keep trying. It was clear she didn't want anything to do with me. But then again, she didn't sound angry. I was

of two minds.

"Maybe we could do something together tonight," she suggested. I looked away. I was not interested in the least. How did I deal with this? I guessed it wouldn't hurt.

"Yeah, maybe," I replied, going into my office.

OoOoO

Throughout the day, I was constantly distracted by thoughts about the moon and Rikki. I was never this protective when we were together. What had changed? I guess you just don't always realise what you have until it is gone.

Sophie approached me again later in the day.

"So, what do you fancy doing tonight?"

"Oh, ah, um, whatever?" I replied. To be honest I hadn't been thinking about it.

"Maybe a meal, maybe a movie, it's a good chance for us to get together away from here,"

"What time are we talking?" I asked.

"I was thinking straight after closing," she answered.

I looked at my watch. I needed to check if Rikki would be alright before I committed to something.

"Can you hold the fort? There is something I need to check first."

OoOoO

I went straight to Will's boatshed. I hesitated and then knocked. Putting my confident persona in place.

"You could have just called instead of making me sweat on it," I heard him say coming to the door. The surprise on his face was evident when he saw me.

"I thought you might get the wrong idea if I called," I joked, coming inside.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"Is Rikki around?"

"No." he replied.

"Well, I need to see her, urgently," I turned to face him. "I want to know if she's alright,"

"Like I said she is not here," he interrupted, showing me the door.

"Well, do you know where she is?" I asked in disbelief. He breathed,

not meeting my eyes.

"You do. I know we don't exactly get on," I began.

"That's one way of putting it," he glared.

"I really need to find her," I said firmly.

"The thing is, I don't think she wants you to find her," Will stated. That hurt. It was probably true though. In my preoccupation of finding Rikki, I forgot about Sophie. Not that I ever confirmed a time that is.

"The girls wouldn't have been dumb enough to go out to Mako Island would they?" I asked.

"They're not dumb," he glared at me again.

"I know that," I defended. "It's just the last time Rikki went out on a full moon it was more than she could handle. Now, is that where she is?" I was getting desperate now. She had to stay safe.

His silence was answer enough.

"Right. I'm going out there,"

"You can't do that," he followed me out of his house.

"Yes I can," I retorted.

OoOoO

"We shouldn't be going out there," Will said to me. "They can handle themselves." We were in his boat on the way to Mako. You could tell he was worried, otherwise he probably wouldn't have come.

'Can they?' I asked him. He looked away. "I know you think I don't care, but I do. I've made some bad decisions, but that doesn't change the way I feel about Rikki."

"You just can't let her go, can you?"

"No. No, I can't," I replied, looking out to the ocean.

OoOoO

When we arrived at the moon pool, the three girls were staring at a light coming from the wall. They hadn't seen us.

"Rikki," I said. All three girls glared at me and Will.

"Are you guys alright?"

"What are you doing here?" Rikki demanded.

"We thought you guys needed help," I replied.

"What would make you think we needed help?" She asked in disbelief.

I looked at the rock wall where they were staring.

"There was this light, right?" I said, turning to Will. He nodded. They didn't say anything. "Rikki?" I questioned.

"Just leave us alone please," Cleo said in frustration. Obviously we had interrupted something.

"I thought I was doing the right thing," I said, looking directly at Rikki. A time when I had offered my help voluntarily and she doesn't even acknowledge me. I was upset. How was I supposed to do right by her?

OoOoO

The following day in the afternoon, I saw Rikki walking towards the trailer park where she lived.

"Rikki!" I called out. She slowed but continued walking. I could imagine her rolling her eyes when she realised it was me. I called her name again. She stopped and turned around as I ran up to her.

"What Zane?" She demanded.

"I'm sorry. I thought I was doing the right thing," I could tell she was taken aback by my apology. "Can you forgive me?" I was worried I had damaged our relationship further.

"Bella made a good point yesterday, she said, 'How could I be mad at someone who cares about us,'" Rikki said. "That doesn't mean I forgive you for everything though Zane. You have hurt me a lot in the past." She said softly.

I nodded. She continued walking. What did that mean? Our relationship status had never been more blurry. Were we friends or not?

There was still hope.

* * *

><p>AN: ****_Hey everyone :D I hope you enjoyed this chapter. I feel like I keep them in character and to the TV show - tell me if you don't agree. Just tell me what you think :-) I love reviews. Sorry it has been so long since the last update. This story takes me the longest to do because I do the script word for word from the episodes. Also having limited internet at university with all my H2O DVDs at home_**...

_**Yeah, thanks so much to **_H2Ozikkiaddict, zikki 3, Cherry003, LNCrow, __**and**_ Acgisme __**for reviewing. It means a lot and makes me want to continue with this story. Anyway, I'm off to a lecture now! See you all next time!**_

7. Chapter 7: Jealousy

Chapter 7

Season 3 Episode 23

Rikki left the shop and began to walk down the beach front. She must have gone once school had finished. I wondered about the beach party. What were we to each other? We were on speaking terms again but she hadn't made it clear whether we were friends or not. I figured, what was the harm in asking her to go with me. I jogged to catch up with her.

"So," I began, "What time do I pick you up?"

I decided to go for the indirect approach. She gave me a questioning look.

"The big beach party! You're going to let me take you aren't you?" I asked. Maybe that could have come out better.

"Why on earth would I do that?" she asked in disbelief.

"I want us to be friends." I stated confidently. Going as friends would be okay right?

"Yeah, right," she said, eyebrows raised.

"Well, we were together for most of your last years of school, so I think there is something right about us being together for this," I explained. It sounded completely logical to me.

"I don't," she said bluntly. My heart sank. She wanted nothing to do with me.

"You can't go by yourself!" I retorted.

"Who said I am?" she replied. I felt disappointment and jealousy begin to flood through me. She had found someone else already?

"Wait, you're going with someone?" I asked, trying to continue with confidence.

"It's actually none of your business," she said, matter-of-factly.

"Seriously, who is it?" I queried.

"Seriously, it's none of your business," she mocked with that smirk of hers. She could be incredibly frustrating sometimes. I stopped walking and stared after her. Was she blowing me off by making an excuse? Or was she really going with someone?

I put my hands in my pockets and distractedly walked back to the café.

I thought about it off and on all afternoon. Who would she be taking? The only person other than me that she had shown interest in was Will. Just thinking of the two of them together made my chest burn. I seriously needed to get my jealousy in check. She couldn't be moving on that quickly right?

Sophie came into the office.

"I thought you were going to help me with these accounts?" she said. Oh yeah, I had forgotten about that.

"Rikki's taking a date to a party," I said, telling her my thoughts. "And I bet it's your brother."

She nodded and said, "Good."

Did I hear that correctly? It was the opposite of good!

"No, it's not," I said in disbelief. I looked back at my phone.

"What do you think about _Zane's _as a name for this place â€" it works," she said, changing the subject. I frowned.

"So does _Rikki's_," I replied. I had named it after her for a reason. There was a moment's silence.

"She's moving on!" Sophie said abruptly. I looked at her sharply.

"That's what going on a date means," she continued. I looked at her, mouth open. I was still in denial. I could tell she still loved me. I wouldn't give up.

"Well, maybe she's just going to make me jealous," I replied, hopefully. She stared at me.

"And if you're wrong?"

"No," I said, convincing myself. "I know Rikki, she'll make me chase after her for a while and then she'll give in and go with me."

Sophie gave up and left the room. I continued with the paperwork. Rikki would come back to me someday.

OoOoO

I was wiping tables when Sophie told me she had something to tell me.

As she spoke the hope in me disappeared.

"She's with Will? I knew it," I said disappointed.

"Maybe it's time for you to move on too," she suggested. She had been doing that a lot lately. I fiddled with the salt on the table.

"And the first step is to get her name off this place," she continued. "And we can start by taking the sign down,"

"Yeah, maybe," I said resigned.

"Everyone's going to see her with Will, you keep her name on your cafÃ©|how pathetic is that going to look?" she sat back. There was a pause. "I'll take care of it," she said before hearing my answer. Maybe she was right. Maybe Rikki was never coming back like I had hoped. I had been such an idiot, taking her for granted. I missed her

more than ever.

As I sat there mulling over my thoughts, I began to get more and more angry. Maybe Will was the reason we had broken up? Maybe he had been after her since they met! I heard the music on the beach begin. The party had started.

OoOoO

As I approached the party, I saw Rikki and Will standing together, talking. Seeing them together made my jealousy flare, and all my feelings took over my judgement. I was going claim my girl back.

"What are you doing?" I asked angrily, pushing him.

"What?" Will asked surprised.

"With Rikki," I said as if it was the most obvious thing. "So much for nothing going on," I said to Rikki.

"Nothing is going on!" she replied. "Not that it's any of your business anyway,"

"Well, I'm making it my business," I said, shoving Will to the ground.

"Back off, both of you!" Rikki said. Will got up again.

"What are you going on about!" he yelled.

"You and Rikki!" I exclaimed. Rikki got between us, a hand on both our chests, keeping us apart.

"You've been after her the whole time!" I said. The music stopped.

"No I haven't!" Will shouted. "I've been after her!"

I stared as Bella came down from the stage. That couldn't be true, could it?

"Me?" Bella asked uncertainly.

"Yeah," Will admitted, quietly. There was silence at the party. That is, until Nate came down from the stage.

"No way Will, Bella came with me!" As he came through he knocked Cleo's cup of water into Bella's back. She sighed at the timing, before running off. Rikki covered her mouth in a gasp. We hoped that she would get away in time. What had I caused?

"Bella!" Will called after her, following her away. I was an idiot. Stupid emotions. Now everyone thought I was pathetic. So much for getting my girl back.

"Could you have made a bigger fool of yourself?" Rikki said incredulous. I walked away, head down.

I heard later that Bella and Will had got together, much to Rikki and

Cleo's joy.

OoOoO

As I thought about what went down at the Beach Party, first I was incredibly embarrassed. Rikki had seen me act like a total moron. Then, I began to think over the positives " Rikki was not seeing anyone. I still had a chance! Then I got into thinking that Sophie was the instigator of all this " she had said that Will and Rikki were definitely together. My embarrassment was her fault " misleading me. Maybe she had superior motives.

When I came into the Caf  the following morning, I went straight to Sophie to talk about what went down yesterday.

"Good timing!" she said sprightly, "They've just finished. Wait till you see the new sign I've bought."

"What happened with Will?" I asked. She looked confused and a bit nervous.

"What?" she asked.

"Well, it's just that you said that he and Rikki were seeing each other," I said, "How come he ended up with Bella?"

"No, that's history," Sophie said. Had she not heard?

"Really," I said, eyebrows raised. "'cause he seemed pretty interested in her at the party,"

Realisation dawned on her.

"You went?"

"I did," I replied, waiting for her reaction. There was a moment's silence.

"I guess I must have got it wrong," she said.

"That's not the only thing you got wrong," I continued, "the name of this place is _Rikki's_,"

"Okay, so maybe she's not with Will," she said exasperated, "But, she's definitely moved on."

"Well, this caf  hasn't," I said simply. I began to walk away.

"What's that going to say to people?" she called after me. I stopped and turned. Would people really care?

"That I own a caf  called Rikki's," I replied firmly. "The sign goes back up. Now."

* * *

><p>AN: _Hey everyone! I hope you enjoyed this chapter! Tell me what you think of the characterisation- do you think its correct?_**

Thanks so much to all the people who follow, have favourited and reviewed this story! I really really appreciate it.

**_Thanks so much to all the reviewers - you make my day!
_**

_Thanks to __Zikki 3, H2Ozikkiaddict, **and **Cherry003 **for reviewing! **_

**Love you all! And hopefully the update won't be too far away!**

8. Chapter 8: Damage

Chapter 8

Season 3 Episode 24

I saw Will and Bella walking together, his arm around her shoulder. I couldn't help but smile.

"Hey," I said cheerfully, "I see you and Bella are pretty solid now,"

"Yeah," he replied with a smile, "What of it?"

"Nothing. It's good," I nodded. He looked at me dubiously. "No, really, I'm pleased for you,"

"Okay," he said uncertainly. He began to walk again.

"And, you're happy about her being alone with the band?" I asked.

"Why wouldn't I be?" he retorted.

"No reason, just ah, don't make the same mistakes I did," I said. I started to walk before stopping.

"What? I'm supposed to take advice from you?" he said incredulously.

"See, I didn't take enough interest in Rikki and her life," I always kicked myself for taking her for granted, not looking after her needs. "Girls like to be the centre of attention," I continued. I walked away, realising that for the first time, I had admitted out loud that I had made mistakes in the relationship. I felt Will's eyes following me as I left.

OoOoO

Season 3 Episode 25

I couldn't believe it â€" after all the work we had put into the cafÃ©, we were going under. Just over a week until the doors would be closed â€" unless of course my Dad changed his mind or I stumbled across some money. Without Rikki, money management had not been the same and the cafÃ© was suffering in her absence. It didn't help that

Sophie had been spending a lot on appearance things and upgrades that then needed to be returned, such as the 'Zane's CafÃ©' sign she had ordered. It was not just disappointment that all my hard work would be for nothing, but Rikki's CafÃ© closing would sever my ties to Rikki â€" it was almost a symbol of our relationship â€" once it was gone, so too would be my chance. Maybe it was time to move on.

As I sat, looking out to sea, I saw Rikki approaching. When she saw me, she looked away, pretending not to notice. It made me sad.

"What? You're not even acknowledging me now?"

"Why should I?" Rikki replied in resignation. She made a fair point. I had been an idiot.

"Okay," I replied. "I probably deserve that."

"And the rest of it?"

"Okay. Go for it," I said pointing at my face, "Take your best shot."

"Nah," she replied, "You're too easy a target at the moment," I missed this banter, but she was right. I just looked out at the sea again.

"See, no comeback," she said. I shook my head.

"Not today," I replied.

"Don't sulk," she said, "I could be a lot meaner you know, without even trying," she said with a smirk. I knew that was true. I sighed.

"It's not you, it's the cafÃ©," I said sadly, "It's going under,"

"If this is some game you're playing, I'm not falling for it," she said.

"I wish it was," I replied honestly. "But at this rate, I'm going to have to close the doors by the end of the week," She had an expression of disbelief. I had her attention for once. She now too looked sad.

"Even after all the work we did?"

I nodded. "Yeah." She came and sat by me.

"It's not the same without you," I stated truthfully. There was a depressed pause between us.

"Go and ask your daddy for money,"

"I did. He said it was my last chance and that I had blown it," I continued, "It's funny, 'cause that's exactly what you said about us,"

It felt like there was mutual feeling and atmosphere between us, one

of melancholy and disappointment. After a long pause, I broke the silence.

"I'm sorry, Rikki," I said earnestly. "I don't know how else to express it,"

She looked greatly taken aback. She knew how rarely I apologised. She put a comforting hand on my shoulder, not saying anything. After a moment, she got up and walked away from the beach.

I too got up and began to walk back to the caf  . It was time to face real life again.

OoOoO

When Sophie and Ryan proposed a plan of getting rich from Mako rock, I was hesitant. They were talking about the moon pool. That place meant so much to Rikki, Cleo, Bella and Emma (wherever she was). They said they would only need a sample and that no one would notice. In and out was appealing. It sounded like I would be getting rich for minimal damage. My money was virtually gone anyway. It sounded like a good gamble. It sounded like Sophie would be doing this anyway â€" if not through me, she would find another person would money â€" she was always a schemer. Against my better judgement, I went through with their plan.

Once we arrived at the moon pool, I went in first to make sure the girls weren't there. It was really hot in there. The closer we got, the guiltier I felt.

"This doesn't feel right," I said. I wanted to leave. Sophie said that we had solved our financial problems when the precious rock was excavated. I swallowed. Why did I allow this to happen? She was never going to forgive me for this.

* * *

><p>AN: ****_Hey everyone! I hope you enjoyed the chapter! Sorry it was so short. Next chapter will be Zane's perspective of graduation...and after that, It will be how I imagine Rikki and Zane work things out...Yay! So stick around for those updates. Thanks so much to the people who have reviewed, followed and favourited this story! I love you all!_**

_Thanks so much to __zikki 3, sammiloveschocolate **and
ByEmiwithlove **for reviewing the previous chapter._

**See you all next update!**

9. Chapter 9: Graduation

Chapter 9

Season 3 Episode 26 [Graduation]

The following day, Sophie was back in my office.

"You're talking about mining in a National Park," I said, eyebrows raised. That was wrong on so many levels; it was illegal.

"No one will know until it's too late, right?" Sophie replied. Too late for what? The plan was to split what we had and Rikki would never find out.

"I say we get all we can," Sophie argued. My head fell back against the chair. What did I get myself into? Even Ryan seemed a little hesitant.

"You wouldn't have found any of this, if it wasn't for me. I just want one more visit! You owe me that much," Sophie said persuasively.

"Haven't we done enough damage?" I began, "That place means a lot to people around here," If only she knew how much.

"Forget them!" Sophie exclaimed. If only I could. Maybe I should.

"One night at Mako Island and we never have to work again," Sophie continued forcefully. I looked down. I needed the money. I seriously needed the money. But what about Rikki? Maybe she wouldn't find out â€" then I could have the money and work on getting her back. The guilt persisted. 'Even if I don't participate they're going to do it anyway,' I rationalised. 'I might as well get a cut,'

"Alright, I'll meet you guys out there after I close up," I said, not meeting Sophie's eyes.

After they left, I put my head in my hands and groaned. I was torn up inside. It felt like nothing was the right decision. Who was I kidding? They were probably going to blow up the place. There was no stopping Sophie. What had I done? Now that the temptation had left the office, I felt things become clearer. If I was ever going to have a chance with Rikki again, then I had to do something. The girls would find out somehow. I loved her. I had done enough damage. It was time to set things right.

OoOoO

I text Rikki. There was no response. That was fair enough. A few minutes later I text her again.

'_This really is important. I need to speak with you.'_

_'__I'm not kidding,' _I text again. I waited another few minutes. Unless she was swimming she would have seen those texts. Maybe she had deleted me from her contacts â€" that would be fair enough as well. I deserved it, but maybe she would forgive me some day.

I wasn't getting through to her so I text Cleo. I didn't have Bella's number, but if I did, I would have text her too. They were most likely together. The mermaid club always was. I frowned. I used to be a part of that club. Cleo didn't reply. I text Rikki again. I must look like a desperate idiot to them.

I sighed. I dialled Rikki's number. Maybe she would answer a phone call. It was cancelled after the third ring. I smiled. That meant that she was looking at her phone. I tried again. And again. I was glad I had calls left on my plan. I was surprised when she answered

the fifth call.

"What, Zane?" she demanded.

"Hello to you too," I replied.

"You better have a damn good reason to be annoying the hell out of me," she said.

"I do!" I exclaimed, trying to keep her on the line. It was really nice to hear her voice. "I have something really important to tell you, but I don't want to do it over the phone,"

"Zane," she warned.

"No really. I'm being serious. Meet me at the beach in ten?" I asked solemnly.

"We'll be there in five," Rikki replied resigned. "This better be good. Can I ask what it's about?"

"Mako," I replied sadly. I hung up. I hoped she wouldn't kill me in five minutes.

OoOoO

The three girls stood close together on the steps as I approached. Rikki moved forward when she spotted me and leant on the railing with folded arms.

"What is it, Zane? What was so important?" She demanded.

After I explained she was looking at me in disbelief. I totally agreed with her emotion. What on earth was I thinking?

"And they're going to steal more?" she asked mouth open.

"I tried to stop them," I defended myself. It wasn't a complete lie, but I hadn't tried hard enough.

"Don't act like you had nothing to do with this," she said, disappointment lacing her voice. She saw right through me. She always had.

"I'm sorry, Rikki," I apologised seriously. "The café was going under," I sighed. "I thought it would solve things," she wasn't looking at me. "Not that that counts for much," I said resigned. I looked down. If only time travel existed. I felt Rikki turn to look at me. Her expression was still angry but I think that in seeing my remorse, she almost felt sorry for me.

"You shouldn't have messed with Mako," she began. "It's powerful, maybe more than us ever thought," she turned to walk away. I needed to redeem myself somehow. I would do anything to win her trust back.

"Rikki, wait," I exclaimed, reaching out. I didn't have to touch her for her to turn around.

"I want to help you," I said, completely serious. "Whatever it is,

I'm there. Okay, after all I've done,"

She seemed to think over my offer for a second. My heart sank when she shook her head.

"No. It's our place. It's up to us," she replied. I let her go that time.

OoOoO

I needed to do something. Who else knew the girls' secret and would do anything to help them? Lewis. But he was in America. Will. My dislike for the guy had diminished after it was revealed that he was interested in Bella, not the girl I loved, and Rikki just saw him as a friend. I knew he hated me though. I figured instead of asking, I would just do.

He had just started his boat as I arrived at his place.

"Will! Hey, Will!"

I just got into his boat. "We've got to get out there, now!"

He looked at me in question. Yeah, probably could explain better.

OoOoO

Will and I ran to the moon pool. The explosion shook the ground beneath our feet. We looked at each other and began to run faster. Will entered first. We were too late.

"What have you done?" Will asked.

"I knew one day I'd be able to help you, look, I've set us up for life!" she exclaimed, a greedy gleam in her eyes. Will walked past her. This wasn't right. The place looked like it was about to fall apart. Where were the girls?

"We all have to leave!" Ryan exclaimed, panicked.

"You heard him, now!" I backed him up.

"I thought you were with me on this?" Sophie asked. Guilt crept through my gut. I shouldn't have been.

"Some things are more important than money," I replied honestly. She gave me a look akin to disgust.

"Leave them," Will told Sophie authoritatively.

"I'm doing this for both of us!" she replied.

"I don't want any of it," Will grabbed her hands. "What's more important to you? Me or the money? I love you sis, but if you take these, you lose me," he pleaded. "And I don't want to lose you," he added desperately. He released her hands. I saw Rikki, Cleo and Bella pop their heads out of the water discretely in the lower cavern of the tunnel. Sophie released the stones. I breathed a sigh of relief. I had to stop her from seeing the girls so I quickly escorted her

out.

OoOoO

It took longer to get to the beach than normal; we walked slower, dejected, in silence. As we arrived at the beach, we saw a sudden tower of light shoot from the Mako Island cone. Will and I shared a worried look. What?

"What was that?" Sophie asked in a scared voice. None of us had an answer.

OoOoO

I waited with Will at his boatshed for news on the girls. When they had arrived an hour or so later we both felt relief. They filled us in on what had happened. I knew that I had overstayed my welcome in the awkward silence that followed, so I left willingly.

OoOoO

The following day was their graduation. I had left school early to focus on the café but it was nice to see old class mates. In fact, the business that the graduation celebration had got me, I could keep the café open for a while longer. I was going to beg my Dad again for the money to keep it afloat.

Rikki was waiting for her drink when I approached her.

"It's good to have you back in here," I said. She turned around, a strange expression on her face — a mixture of hurt, disappointment and sadness. "It seems right, somehow,"

She gave a half-smile.

"Don't get your hopes up, I'm just visiting," she replied.

"Well come back any time, any time at all,"

She took a breath.

"I have a feeling that I'll be spending my entire summer at—"

"Let me guess, Mako," I interrupted. An annoyed expression took over her face at my disruption.

"If you ever need any company out there—" I shrugged, letting the idea hang.

She gave me a teasing smirk, one of the ones I love so much.

"I'll be sure to call anyone except you," She gave me a teasing smirk, one of the ones I love so much, and walked away.

"That was a joke right?" I called after her. She just gave me another smile. She smiled at me. I did a mental fist pump. I felt the happiness spread across my face. Thank God I did the right thing that time. Maybe she had forgiven me slightly, maybe subconsciously. I knew I was a long way from redemption, but every little thing matters.

I wasn't going to give up.

****A/N:** _Hey everyone! I hope you enjoyed this instalment :) The final episode of H2O :(I'm sorry it took me months to update - my other stories had priority. Anyway, because this is pretty much a Zikki fic, now, this story shall undertake (to the best of my ability/hopefully it will be true to the characters) Rikki and Zane getting back together. I don't know how I'm going to do it yet, but I will :P I loved them as a couple (before season 3 screwed it up) - as you can probably tell by my writing, so I'm getting them back together. _**

****_Tell me what you think of this chapter/story! Things you love and constructive criticism - I take it all into account. I hope the next update won't be too far away :P_****

****_Thanks so much to _**_zikki 3, **and **ByEmiwithLove **for reviewing the last chapter. I really appreciate it. Knowing people are actually reading boosts my inspiration :P **_**

Thanks again! Please review! It makes me write faster - makes it more urgent to update.****

See you all next time!****

10. Chapter 10: Daddy Issues

****Chapter 10****

The day after the graduation party at the cafÃ©, I went directly to my father. I needed money, and a lot of it, to save the cafÃ©. Rikki and I had put too much effort into it for it to sink. I know Rikki wouldn't show it, but she would be disappointed to see our place go to another owner. Yes, our place. If Rikki takes me back, I want us to be able to share in something again. I could just let it go, I guess, but it has a little too much sentimental value.

"Please Dad," I pleaded.

"Zane, we have already discussed this. You've blown it," Dad said unsympathetically. "Why don't you move on from the blasted place and go study something."

"It's not just some place, Dad. It means a lot to me. Come on, once it gets going again, I'll pay you back, every cent,"

"Zane, what makes you think you can get the dump back off the ground?" he scoffed. I gritted my teeth.

"A lot of customers are loyal to Rikki's cafÃ©. I promise I'll invest it well this time,"

"You promise huh?" he scoffed again. "And Rikki's? That girl is not worth your time. Stop pining after her and focus on the real world."

"I'm not pining," I denied. "And she is not just some girl."

"There you go again, Zane. Contradicting yourself. You're still in love with her, even I can tell that,"

I didn't say anything. Dad sighed.

"Look, the matter has been settled. I've said no. I don't want to waste any more money on that place, or on you," Ouch. "You need to get your head out of that disgusting lovesick haze you are in, and go and study business. You need to start thinking about your future."

"My future," I raised my eyebrows. "What do you care?"

"You're my son, I care about what your future holds," he answered.

"Oh really? That's coming from the guy who had abandoned me more times than I can count,"

"Zane," he warned. "You are going to study business. We both know that you cannot run anything on your own. Tell me honestly, what do you want to do with your life?"

That brought me up short. I had really only thought about running the café with Rikki. Now that it was closing, I still was only thinking about my ex-girlfriend. Wow, I really was a lovesick puppy. Gross. No wonder Rikki wanted nothing to do with me. Maybe what I needed to do was prove that I was okay and independent without her—maybe that way I could win her back. But I needed to be near to her to do that. Shoot, I didn't even know what she planned on doing now that she had left school.

"I don't know," I replied. "But I know I don't want to leave just yet. You can't force me into anything, Dad. I know you just want me to do well to make you look good, you don't care at all." I continued sadly, accusingly.

My Dad shook his head.

"Zane,"

"No, I know I'm right. You have never gone out of your way for me. You won't give me money when I need it—"

"That's because you lost it all the first time!" Dad interrupted, fiercely. "To keep our lifestyle, I can't just be dropping money for your every whim. I want to be climbing, not falling."

"Because a few thousand will really damage your piggy bank," I rolled my eyes. "Great chat, Dad. I'll just work at a bar or something. Maybe McDonald's will be a great source of income. What will that say to your competitors, huh?"

Dad cared more about image than much else—aside from money. I hoped this argument would work in my favour.

"If I promised to complete a business diploma or degree of some kind, will you give me the money to keep the café?" I asked. "Because if you don't support the café, then I won't go to higher education. You know how much I hated school."

My Dad was seriously considering the offer.

"You promise to go and dedicate yourself to your studies if I save this little caf   of yours?" he asked to clarify.

"I promise," I replied seriously.

Our eyes met, staring each other down.

I can't believe my Dad, Harrison Bennett, agreed to that. I can't believe I'm going to study. Let's hope I know what I'm doing.

Dad has promised to pay off my debts for the caf   and staff and run it while I'm away studying. I get to keep the place that means so much to me. I know that if the Caf   had not had been saved, the next owner would probably demolish the place and build something else. I guess it's like my relationship with Rikki; some things are just worth saving.

OoOoO

I didn't see Rikki at all for a week. As she had said, she was most likely at Mako, probably fixing up Sophie's mess. It meant that I hadn't been able to give her the fantastic news about the caf  . Today, I was going to actively seek her out. In saying that, she probably wasn't going to like my way of doing that.

I drove my boat over to the beach at Mako after passing the manager's tag to another staff member at the caf  . I put the anchor in the sand and walked the familiar trek to the land entrance to the moon pool. I sincerely hoped that Bella and Cleo wouldn't be there. A three way attack, verbally or physically, depending on how badly received I am, would not be good at all.

Rikki would kill me if she heard this, but, I believe that she has a soft spot for me â   she wouldn't hurt meâ  | at least, not that severely.

I quietly slid down the hole into the moon pool cavern, and went the well-tread route to the pool. I gingerly poked my head around the corner, surveying the landscape. I couldn't believe my luck. Rikki was there, alone. She sat, knees brought up to her chest, sitting on the sand next to where that strange waterfall had been.

"Hey," I said. Oh, that was the wrong approach. Rikki startled suddenly, her eyes snapping to where I stood. Not for the first time, I wondered what I had got myself into.

"Zane," she growled my name. No, not good at all. "What the hell are you doing here?"

* * *

><p>AN: _Hey everyone! I'm so sorry it has been so long! I'm back at Uni now, and balancing so many stories is always difficult! Anyway, I hope you enjoyed this chapter. Let me know what you thought about it, and what you want to see happen now or in the future of this story. I love all of you for your support. Your reviews really help me to get ideas and inspire me to keep writing. I really hope

you think that the characters are in character, I really do put a lot of thought into it all :D_**

_I am actually writing an original story at the moment as well, I am about five chapters in. It's a very different genre to what I usually write - it's a crime drama/romance kind of thing :P Anyway, let me know if you want to read it! _

Thanks so much to the following people for reviewing the previous chapter (I love you loads!)

zikki 3 - **Thanks! I'm so glad you like it. Thanks for being such a loyal reader, still with me after all this time!**

_ Ziri - _**_In the future, Rikki's perspective could be an option._****_Thanks for reading and letting me know your thoughts. I really appreciate it! I love new readers :D_**

Sammiloveschocolate - **Thanks! And thanks for being an awesome sister. I'll see you tomorrow! It's been three weeks already...wow.**

HybridsRose - **He does have a while to go, but I hope the ride is believable. Thanks so much for being such a loyal friend, and reader. Thanks for reviewing.**

triss and cass -** They will eventually! I loved them too much as a couple for them not to :P Thanks for reviewing twice! It really gets me to get my act together. Sorry it has taken a while.**

HP-Dramaqueen - ** Thanks so much! I'm glad you are enjoying it. I am a sucker for a happy ending, so don't worry about that ;D**

* * *

><p>Thanks so much guys!</p>

**I'll see you next time :D (Probably on another one of my stories first :P)**

P.S I am going to Miranda Sings' (Colleen Ballinger's) show in Auckland (NZ) on Saturday night. I'm so excited!

11. Chapter 11: Talking

Chapter 11

Rikki stood up suddenly, staring at me angrily.

When I didn't answer the first time, she asked again.

"What are you doing here, Zane?"

"Iâ€¦uhâ€¦I wanted to tell you something?" I asked. It came out like a question.

"You came to the moon pool just to tell me something?" she asked in disbelief.

"Yeah?" I responded hesitantly. She rolled her eyes. Okay, at least that meant I wasn't about to be roasted alive. She was glaring at me. She was so cute when she was mad. Well, cuter when it is not directed at me. A few moments must have passed.

"Well?" Rikki demanded.

"Uhâ€¦" Why was my brain not working coherently? Her eyebrows lifted. "I have some good news." I started.

"This better be good," she muttered.

"I'm going to be able to save our cafÃ©," I said with a smile. Her glare lessened in its icy degree. She was surprised.

"That's good," she frowned. "But it's your cafÃ©. Not mine."

My heart sank a little.

"I still don't see why you had to invade Mako to tell me this," she continued.

"Why? I thought with the amount of effort you invested in it, you'd want to know its fate," I replied. "I know you care." Something shifted in her expression. Just a flicker, but I noticed. I looked around the cavern briefly. When I looked back at her face, she was no longer glaring. She had a blank, yet sad expression on her face.

"So how did you get the money?" she asked after a short time.

"I used my charm," I smirked. She lifted her eyebrows. Right, not time for joking.

"Sorry," I took a breath. "I begged my Dad again. In exchange for something, he'd give me the money."

She looked warily at me.

"In exchange for what?"

"I promised I'd go and study business," I replied.

"You're going to study?" she asked in disbelief. I nodded in response.

"Long story short, he can afford to get us back on our feet again, so I played the image card. He values image, and what would it say about him if his son worked in a socially low-classed job?" I grinned. I saw a smirk playing on Rikki's lips. "I just have to study. I'll still have to work out studying and managing the cafÃ© and everything that comes with that balance, but yeah."

"Wow. That'll be hard," Rikki commented. I nodded.

"I'll have to work hard, but maybe it will be good for me?" I smiled at her. "Do you know what you're going to do this coming year?"

"I'm not sureâ€¦I've always been interested inâ€¦no, it's silly. It's a fantasy," Rikki stopped, folding her arms. "Who am I kidding," she

muttered.

"Do you think that you wouldn't have the self-discipline to do it?"

Rikki shrugged, looking up to glare at me.

"I think that you would. I know you, when you want to do something, nothing gets in the way of your tenacity," I said.

Rikki sighed.

"I can't believe I'm discussing this with you," she said, dropping down to sit on the sand again. I quietly sat down next to her, about a metre of space between us. I took her silence as a soundless welcome. I waited for her cue. I had made enough screw ups by opening my mouth too soon, and otherwise.

"I've always been interested in treasureâ€¦shipwrecks and the rest," Rikki began quietly. "Iâ€¦I want to be a treasure hunter."

Now, that was an exciting idea.

"You mean specialising in underwater retrieval?" I asked. She nodded. "That's an awesome idea, Rikki. You'd be great at that!" I grinned. She gave me a half-smile in response, obviously pleased at my encouraging reaction.

"You're the first to think that," she said, looking away again. I frowned.

"Out of who?"

"Cleo and Bella think it would be dangerous for meâ€¦being in shipwrecks with a possibility of divers spotting me. Also, they don't think I could get a treasure license," Rikki said, picking at some imaginary lint on her shorts. "I haven't told my Dad yetâ€¦I think he wants me to be the first Chadwick to get a degree, but I'm just not that way inclined."

"I think you should do what you want to do," I told her. "Wouldn't it be better to try, than regret not even attempting?"

"Thanks," she said, giving me the first genuine smile in a while. She looked at her watch, before standing up.

"I'll see you around, Zane," she said. Rikki then dived into the water and swam away.

I sat on the sand in the moon pool cavern with a dorky grin on my face. She had smiled at me. And let me talk to her. Man, I needed to pull myself together. Obviously, she appreciated me not pushing, just being there for her. I would take whatever she would give me.

"Zane," I heard my name called, interrupting my thoughts. I looked up to see a puzzled-looking Cleo and Bella in the moon pool. "What are you doing here?"

OoOoO

"Oh, hey girls," I greeted awkwardly. My trip to Mako probably could have been thought out better, but it was totally worth it. She smiled at me. I stood up under the questioning stares of the two mermaids in the pool.

"I was actually just leaving." I continued, turning towards the tunnel path and walking in that direction.

"Zane!" Cleo exclaimed. "That wasn't an answer."

Considering I couldn't give them one they'd like, I left, a smirk on my face from the sound of Cleo's exasperated sigh.

OoOoO

That evening, I began researching which tertiary institutions would let me study business within the Gold Coast. There were many options within Brisbane, but that wouldn't allow me to run the café very well. Wow, I had a lot of tabs open. Oh, this was promising, Griffith University had a campus in the Gold Coast. And I could study business there. Perfect. As I expected, it was a three year course if I opted for full time study. Zane Bennett was going to get a Bachelor of Business majoring in Management. I never thought that would ever happen. I sighed. I hoped I could actually get in. I might have to sit some tests. The horror. Rikki may have been worried about her future, but I was just as anxious about mine. I bookmarked a few pages before exiting the browser and closing the lid of my laptop. I sank back into the couch cushions with a sigh. There was a reason I didn't really want to study. Maybe I would surprise myself.

I heard my Dad come into the lounge. He grabbed the remote and flicked the television on, sinking into his favourite chair and putting his feet up on the coffee table.

"Hey Dad, do you know much about treasure retrieval?" I asked. "How do you make underwater treasure recovery legal?"

He looked up at me surprised.

"What, have you found something?"

"No, I'm just enquiring for a friend. I'm just interested in it, that's all,"

"From what I know, rights to a treasure depends on where it is found, who it originally belonged to, and so on. If we're talking underwater recovery here, the shipwrecks are often still owned by the ship-owners, insurance companies or the government, so a professional 'treasure hunter,' if you will, is usually contracted out to retrieve it. Some professionals have their own companies which get them known amongst people who want to hire them."

The ad break was over so I knew that the conversation was over. Nevertheless, that was very interesting. If Rikki could get contracted to find underwater treasure, it would be perfect. Maybe her dream wasn't so impossible after all.

* * *

><p>AN: _Hey everyone! I really hope you enjoyed this chapter! I thought it was an important step on the road to the reparation of the Zikki friendship, which I think is important to them eventually getting back together. I hope you guys agree. Please tell me what you thought and what you would like to see :D I'm sorry it took me a while to get this chapter out, I've been balancing uni work, life, and other fanfictions :P _**

Thank you so very much to _zikki 3, Sammiloveschocolate, Kiradoughnugget **and **HybridsRose **for reviewing. It means so much to me, and your support means everything. This story would have ended long ago if not for the on-going support of people like you inspiring me to keep writing something I love. **_****

Thanks so much!

_I'll see you all next time. I'm not sure when the next update will be because I'm approaching a really busy uni time with assignments and all, but I hope it won't be too long, nevertheless. In the meantime, you can check out my other stories :P **SHAMELESS PLUG _**

Thanks again!

End
file.